



News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

11th Annual Girl-Wise Conference

Girl-Wise is a daylong free conference for all girls attending junior high or high schools throughout the Lake County community. This year's Girl-Wise conference will take place on Saturday, May 3, 2014, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m., at the College of Lake County, Grayslake Campus, Building C. The day begins with registration, a clothing donation center, Jr. Challenge course teambuilding activities, and a resource fair. Thereafter, the girls will convene in the main auditorium for opening remarks and the featured speaker.

The featured speaker for this year's conference is Erin Merry. Erin was a victim of sexual abuse as a child. It is now her mission to take the stigma and shame off of sexual abuse survivors and give them a reason to speak. By doing so she speaks at many forums nationwide and has worked very hard to create Erin's Law. Erin's law, for states that have passed it, is a requirement of all public schools to teach sexual abuse prevention. Erin will be telling her story of overcoming, education, and prevention.

Afterwards, the attendees will be divided into junior high and high school breakout groups to address topics dealing with stress, empowerment, healthy body and minds, school success, and others. During the morning breakout sessions parents will also have an opportunity to attend an informative workshop. This year's topic is "Positive Body Image and Self-Esteem."

Following lunch, which is provided for all of the participants, the girls will view a play performed by the "Reality Theatre Troupe" of Omni Youth Services and complete the second half of the breakout sessions. Throughout the day, the young ladies participate in several activities and are provided a wealth of information to absorb; e.g., how to begin new friendships, strengthen old friendships, bolster self-esteem, empower and motivate oneself, and just have fun.

The conference is a collaborative effort between a host of agencies and volunteers that include the 19th Judicial Circuit, Regional Office of Education, College of Lake County, Lake County State's Attorney's Office, Juvenile Officers Association, Juvenile Justice Council, Omni Youth Services, NICASA, Zacharias Center, Warren Township, One Hope United, Students from Warren Township High School, Huntington Learning Center, Lincolnshire Police Department, the Fitting Room and many volunteers throughout the community.

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